

Remarks

Entry of the above amendments is requested for the purpose of placing this application in condition for allowance.

The amendments to the specification correct a reference to Fig. 4 (formerly stated as "Fig. 2"); and add the correct reference numeral to the transceiver element.

Originally presented claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as allegedly indefinite by virtue of the term "visible manner". This term has been deleted and replaced with the term "visibly" as a modifier for the word "formed". It is respectfully submitted that the phrase "visibly formed" as used in claim 1 as currently amended is clear and definite from the description of the billing statement in the specification and the illustration of the billing statement 10 in Fig. 1, which shows an example of a billing statement 10 with information visibly formed thereon. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §112 is no longer apposite to claim 1 as presently amended.

Originally presented claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over the disclosures of Joseph et al '428 in view of Wells et al '992. As currently amended, claim 1 requires a sheet medium for providing a surface on which billing information can be visibly formed; and an information storage and transfer circuit carried by said sheet medium for storing an electronic copy of said billing information in a read-only manner so that said billing information can be extracted for courier routing and payment purposes, said information storage and transfer circuit including an RFID integrated circuit and an antenna. Both Joseph et al and Wells et al are devoid of any such combination of elements. Joseph et al disclose an optical sensor system of the same general type described in the Background of the Invention section of the instant application. This optical sensor system uses an optical scanner 10 to scan the visible bar codes 12 printed on an envelope in the process of sorting mail. The only information contained in the bar codes is the postal code information identifying the regional destination (the zip code for U.S. mail) of the envelope bearing the bar code. Thus, Joseph et al fail to directly teach or

inherently suggest a sheet medium for providing a surface on which billing information can be visibly formed, as now required by claim 1. Further, in the Joseph et al optical scanning system the postal code image information read by the optical scanner 10 is stored in random access memory associated to a microprocessor (col. 3, lines 64-66) for further image processing to identify and decode the type of postal code (i.e., whether U.S., U.K., Canadian, or other type of postal code) and to determine the value of successfully decoded postal types. Neither the random access memory nor the microprocessor is carried by the envelope on which the postal codes are visibly formed. Thus, Joseph et al fail to teach directly or inherently suggest a sheet medium and an information storage and transfer circuit carried by said sheet medium for storing an electronic copy of said billing information in a read-only manner so that said billing information can be extracted for courier routing and payment purposes, as now required by claim 1. In addition, The Joseph et al disclosure is entirely devoid of any reference to an RFID integrated circuit and an antenna: this is not surprising since Joseph et al are entirely devoted to optical scanning of postal codes visibly formed on an envelope and processing of the optical images obtained by scanning the postal codes. Consequently, Joseph et al fail to teach directly or inherently suggest an RFID integrated circuit and an antenna carried by a sheet medium and serving as an information storage and transfer circuit for storing an electronic copy of billing information in a read-only manner, as now required by claim 1.

The Wells et al reference has been carefully considered but is not seen to supply the deficiencies noted above with respect to the Joseph et al disclosure. Wells et al are directed to a system and method of in-line verification, reporting, and tracking of mail pieces processed through a mail routing procedure. While this reference does indicate that the individual mail pieces may contain billing information inside the mailing envelope((col. 7, lines 32-33), there is no teaching that the billing information can be electronically stored in an information storage and transfer circuit carried by the envelope (or the document contained in the envelope). The closest approach is found in the discussion beginning in col. 7, 29 and ending in col. 8, line 24 which teaches that billing information may be stored

in electronic form in a mainframe 64 and used to print a document. It is respectfully submitted that this teaching is substantially different from that required to meet the limitations of claim 1 recited above. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that the Joseph et al and the Wells et al disclosures, taken singly or in combination, fail to render obvious the combination recited in claim 1.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1, and claims 3 and 4 dependent therefrom, are patentable over the disclosures of the Joseph et al and the Wells et al references. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this case for issue.

If deemed useful in any further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at (702)-270-8853.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Warren P. Kujawa".

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